14: Huffman M-5 (no date) 1931
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Chapter Ten

THE NUER LANGUAGE

RESULTS OF STUDY

THE Nuer language in most points has some similarity to the other Nilotic languages, having many of the same sounds, but it is a distinct language in itself, and not an outgrowth of the others. Possibly it shows more similarity to the Dinka than to any other of the neighbouring tongues.

Various systems have been used in reducing this language to writing, but no one system has been found which seemed to satisfy the different missions and the Government officials who were using a Nilotic language. So in April 1928 the Sudan Government called a conference at Rejaf, where representatives of the missions and governments engaged in work among the Nilotic tribes were present.

The Government had invited Professor Westermann of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures to prepare a system of certain signs to represent the unusual sounds of the Nilotic tongues. Professor Westermann was present and the new system was tested with the various natives at the conference who were present for that purpose from the different tribes.

Thus for the first time a common system was adopted for general use throughout all the Nilotic tribes wherever any effort is being made to reduce any of these languages to writing. This in itself is a big accomplishment, as all missions as well as all Government officials have accepted the system.

A standard course of study for the elementary schools was also adopted.

The Nuer language so far has not been very largely